1. FRAMEWORK OF THE CONFERENCE

Europe today is experiencing an alarming spread of violent racist manifestations and young people are affected both as victims and perpetrators.

In cooperation with the National Afro-Swedish Association and GetEducated - Learning Media Against Racism, UNITED for Intercultural Action organised an international conference near Stockholm, with the aim to create a space for antiracial educational tools to be available and accessible all over Europe. For 5 days, 67 antiracism activists, experts and multipliers representing 65 organisations in 31 European countries worked together, shared practices and developed strategies on current issues related to right-wing extremism, manifestations of racism and migration, borders of Europe and inequality in Europe.

The conference “Get Educated, Fight Racism!” was part of the long-term cooperation project ‘Civil Society Against Right-wing Extremism’, initiated by civil society organisations from different European countries as a response to the alarming spread of deeply rooted racism, nationalism, antisemitism, hate speech and right-wing extremism in Europe. Within this project, nine partner organisations active within the UNITED network are closely cooperating in analysing occurrences, forms and strategies of right-wing extremism in Europe, sharing practices on how to deal with the increasing influence of extreme right-wing groups in their countries and finding common approaches to push back the extreme right from the public space.

The program of the conference was prepared by an International Preparatory Group, consisting of experienced antiracism activists from partner organisations involved in the project ‘Civil Society against Right-Wing Extremism’ and other grass root organisations from different European countries.

The conference made use of different non-formal education methods such as: panel discussion, working groups, debates, lectures, plenary sessions, political cafes, intercultural activities, information market and many others. In the evening of the arrival day, participants were invited to get into an ice-breaking activity where they could get to know each other and to share opinions about minority-majority, political views, etc.

In order to set a good start of the discussions in the conference, facilitators invited participants into the “Danger of words” working groups to explore meanings of words, to open up for different ways of using words and also to keep the group alert for misunderstandings that can occur during discussions.

2. RACISM

2.1 Racism in Sweden

As of 2004, 13.5% of the population in Sweden was foreign-born. Finns make up about 5% of the whole population and Sami people, an ethnic group living in the North of Sweden is only about 20,000 people. Approximately 77,500 of the Swedish population is from Africa.

Sweden has taken in refugees from various countries fleeing repression, including people from Chile, Vietnam, Iran, and more recently from conflict-zones in the former Yugoslavia, Iraq and the Horn of Africa.

Sweden has made relatively good headway towards the aim of equality, according to popular beliefs. However the truth is somewhat different, as racism is just as present in Sweden as in any other country and major efforts must therefore be put into place to combat it.

The ethnic power structure and hierarchy play a big role in racism and discrimination in Sweden, placing native-born Swedes at the top level and non-Europeans at the bottom. While statistics indicate that immigrants are discriminated against as a group, in reality visible ethnic minorities are the ones subjected to higher levels of discrimination. The skin colour plays a decisive role in an individual’s opportunities in the labour market. This is particularly true in regard to academics from Africa.

The situation is quite similar for the immigrants from the Middle East. Islamophobia, i.e. negative attitudes and actions that are specifically directed towards Muslims, has become more apparent recently. Roma is another group that has clearly been discriminated against and marginalised as well. The daily racism that affects ethnic minorities is found not only in working life but also in other parts of society. It occurs in school, politics, public services, nightlife, the legal system, media and housing.

It is difficult to raise questions concerning racism and discrimination in the Swedish society that has a self-image as a primary force for human rights - particularly in regard to foreign policy. There are thus strong tendencies, particularly among policymakers, to prioritise problems other than racism and discrimination.
For a better illustration of how racism is manifested and experienced in Sweden, three very interesting presentations were offered to participants. One was made by Ombudsman against Racism, an institution fighting Structural Racism in Sweden and other two were given by the National Afro-Swedish Association and Centre Against Racism, which gave an example of antiracism activism and a research-based illustration of how racism is experienced on a personal level by Afro-Swedes.

2.2 Institutional Racism

Structural discrimination or institutional racism refers to rules, norms, routines, attitude and behaviour patterns within institutions/structures obstructing ethnic or religious minorities in achieving the same rights and opportunities as majority has. Denial of ethnic discrimination is apparent in Swedish immigrant and integration policy, which causes difficulties in banning discrimination in and outside of working life. Swedish history is a part of European history, with the same racism and discrimination.

To fight structural discrimination in Sweden and in other European countries, the Ombudsman proposed a few measures: to create an anti-discrimination law on all grounds; to add anti-discrimination clauses in all public contracts; to implement Equality Plans and make them transparent in all government agencies; to implement Discrimination testing; to insert educational programs in schools concerning topics such as Swedish history of human rights violations; to introduce anti-discrimination education in the university curricula; to empower NGOs in promoting their advocacy role. “To realise the positive, there must be a willingness to recognise the negative”

2.3 Antiracism activism in Sweden

When it comes to antiracism activism in Sweden, civil society organisations play an important role in Swedish democratic society. In the recent years, due to the growing attention to racism and discrimination in Europe, civil society organisations receive more support in work related to the common interests of minorities. Thanks to this support measures, the establishment of the Centre Against Racism and of the National Afro-Swedish Association was possible, having local anti-discrimination bureaus all over Sweden.

In addition, support for improving laws against discrimination and for the introduction of anti-discrimination clauses in local and national government contracts was provided. As anti-discrimination is a relatively new field of law, NGOs have a key role to play in raising awareness regarding its potential. NGOs such as the National Afro-Swedish Association can both directly engage in strategic litigations and support others by gathering data, etc.

The National Afro-Swedish Association, part of a worldwide network of African Diaspora, is working on the wellbeing and integration of Afro-Swedes in Sweden. Their activities mainly consist of involving Africans from different African countries; advising government institutions; promoting equal opportunities; fighting against anti-black racism (Afrophobia) and Islamophobia; running and supporting projects in Sweden and Africa.

According to the monitoring results of their projects, it is shown that the local population did not have knowledge about the problems faced by the Afro-Swedes, although 50% of the complaints to the Discrimination Ombudsman are coming from them. One problem is that the roles of advisors, educators and keepers of order are reserved for autochthon Swedish while ‘the others’ are forced into a conditional existence where competence, honour, knowledge, commitment and even the right to be in Sweden can be questioned.

Sweden has one of the largest migrant population in Europe and it needs to adjust its conditions in order for it to become a truly multi ethnic society.

2.4 Afrophobia! Facing your/our fears...

A representative of the Centre Against Racism presented the results of a survey about how discrimination and racism are experienced on personal level by young Afro-Swedes. The research intended to raise awareness about the everyday existence of institutional racism, the historically constructed racial discourses of ‘black’ and ‘white’ and about the inequality among the Swedish ethnic minority.

The research was initiated together with the Ombudsman against Racism and aimed to map out the experiences of discrimination and racism, particularly what is experienced as violation, among Afro-Swedish youth (15-31 years) living in Sweden. The manifestations of Afrophobia are usually expressed through racial verbal abuse, negative metaphors, integrity violations, exclusion, criminalisation and violence. These Afrophobic manifestations are taking place in different institutions. In school youngsters face physical violation from their peers; teachers are legitimising racial verbal abuse, while black teachers are physically and verbally abused by their students. At working place Afro-Swedes are excluded from high-status jobs. In public spaces they are constantly exposed to spontaneous police interrogation questioning the rights of black youth to be in certain social spaces, and even facing sexual harassment. On top of this the media is showing negative images of Africa. Would it be different if they had black people in the media?
2.5 New Faces of Racism! A reality in front of us

Struggle against discrimination and racism is going on all over Europe. We can never solve the problem without tackling the issue of elimination of all forms of racial discrimination by referring to its origins. Nowadays it has become difficult to define the roots of various manifestations of racism as we experience today and it needs to be addressed at an initial point. The Thematic Working Group “Face It! New Faces of Racism” raised all these topics during the working sessions and tried to find solutions based on diverse experiences and working approaches of participants.

People do not openly admit that they are in favour of segregation, because they are afraid of being judged as racist. Still, this opinion exists in the mind of many people. Furthermore, it becomes a trend to use signs of racism in public, as a reaction to people’s fears towards migrants and minority groups. An example was given: after the assassination of Hırant Dink, an Armenian intellectual living in Turkey, a white beret worn by the murderer, became a fashion among the right-wing extremists.

The impact of mass media on large public is the most worrying concern of the working group. Media plays a big role in spreading stereotypes and hate speech. In Poland, stereotypes that were mainly developed by Polish soviet authorities are remaining visible in the media. In Hungary the most important problem regards the Roma minority: 6-7% of the population is suffering from prejudices, unemployment and poverty. The result of social researches is that there is prejudice and ’soft-racism’ in the society, mostly against the Roma. In schools this problem is more serious, segregation between Hungarians and Roma affects the socialisation process.

How should society act and react when new forms of racism become a part of people’s daily life? We are facing so many new shapes of racism; it is not about colour anymore! New forms of racism are based on systematic discrimination.

The working group collected successful practices brought by the participants, aimed to share experiences. Some of the organisations directly involve the minority population by challenging them to represent themselves through art (such as theatre, drawing, music, photography, graffiti, dance, and so on). In this way they become visible in the society; sometimes they even reach professional artists and activate them to support their projects. Other organisations draw the attention of media in order to spread information about their activities and mission. Another strategy is to stimulate students to write their thesis and conduct researches on the issue of equality for migrants. Last but not least applying for grassroots actions (mass-mailing to the institutions, workshops and media monitoring against racism and discrimination) was suggested as a powerful tool as well. The common strategy of the antiracism movement in Europe should include: lobbying, finding alternative and creative ways of struggle through performances, role-playing games, forum theatres, etc. The ART (Aggression Replacement Training) can be one of the effective methods to educate teachers and children that can improve their social, ethic and moral behaviour and control aggression.

2.6 Preventing discrimination and violence - An example of good practice

In Malmö, the third largest city in Sweden, the violent attitude of police towards youth immigrants is present in daily life. Immigrants are often questioned by policemen without a lawyer or a representative from the social services and treated with brutality. The speaker, a Kurdish Iraqi refugee in Sweden, experienced in international migration and ethnic relations, presented the approach that he is successfully using in tackling multiple manifestations of racism towards migrant youth. He is organising meetings, training courses, workshops for police officers and civil office employees dealing with racist attitudes. The speaker emphasised the importance of raising awareness about racism denial, particularly among teachers. He recommended strategies to be used against discrimination and violence: to organise events about discrimination in the work and service sector (transport, communications, restaurants, cleaning etc.), during conferences of the Swedish business world.

2.7 Get Active & Speak Up Against Racism: 21 March - European Action Week Against Racism

UNITED stimulated participants to join a successful European-wide campaign around 21 March, the International Day for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In the frame of this campaign thousands of people all over Europe are actively engaged in the struggle against racism and promotion of tolerance, respect, equal rights and celebration of diversity in Europe. A wide variety of activities are organised every year on local, national and international level such as: festivals, demonstrations, movie screenings, educational workshops, etc. Any organisation in Europe that wants to join the campaign receives campaign material from UNITED for free (posters, stickers, information leaflets, etc) as well as coordination support to make the activity visible on the European level.

During the campaign working group, the directions of the up-coming European Action Week Against Racism were discussed, concrete ideas for campaign materials and catchy slogans were developed
NEOFASCISM AND EXTREME RIGHT

### 3.1 Fascism! Spot it and Stop it!

The Thematic Working Group “Fascism, Spot It and Stop It!” analysed different manifestations of neofascism in different countries and developed ways to stop it.

The Social Centre Organisation from Ukraine monitors racist activities and counteracts on publications with nazi contents on the Internet. Kulturburo Sachsen from Germany involves local citizens to stop neo-nazi activities in the local communities. The Never Again Association in Poland mobilises youth through cultural campaigns to combat fascism in concerts and football matches; they also discredit fascist officials’ public speeches. Youth Human Rights Movement from Russia presented a documentary about different antifascist street actions organised in Russia. The partner organisations from the Grundvigt Project ‘Civil Society Against Right-wing Extremism’ presented and evaluated the results of the 9th November Campaign “Act Against Intolerance” in 2007.

After three days of intense exchange of knowledge and experiences, participants came up with common strategies and actions to spot and stop neofascism: to defend democracy and stop nazi demonstrations; to form alliances to discredit fascist officials; to take back the public platform and reduce chances for violent acts; to criminalise hate speech and put a pressure on the state administration; to take the problems seriously on a legislative level.

### 3.2 Political agenda of new fascist groups

Nowadays, right-wing extremism is an increasing force throughout Europe. Hate crimes against vulnerable groups are turning into a permanent and invisible ‘Kristallnacht’ pogrom. Official and unofficial reports show that the number of hate crimes has been growing enormously during the last years. A panel discussion “New Faces of Fascism” has been organised in the conference to illustrate the specific manifestations of neonazi movements and how the extreme right ideology is advancing in the political agenda of governments.

A speaker from Kulturburo Sachsen from Germany talked about new fascism in Germany and how the right-wing extremism gained influence in Germany.

In Germany right-wing extremists apply new tactics to gain influence in political and public life. With its strategy to show constant presence in the public, to adopt new originally moderate or even leftist topics and to concentrate its forces in certain regions, the extreme right party NPD gained seats in two federal parliaments. Their open collaboration with the neonazi movement attracts more and more people to enter the party. Thus, the NPD could double their membership number in the last ten years. German right-wing extremists are well linked across Europe, both in terms of party political co-operations and sub-cultural events, e.g. the festival “For a Europe of Nations” which takes place in Germany every year.

We have to understand that nowadays fascism is becoming a lifestyle, a trend. Neonazi activists sell their “products” (music, t-shirts, bags, etc with neonazi messages on it) within schools. The nazi attacks are getting more direct, like physical harassment, murders and tortures. Statistics shows that 55% of the German population thinks that there are too many foreigners in the country, obviously the right-wing ideology is particularly popular in the middle-class society, while other Germans are worried about the growing political agenda of fascist groups. In 2004 the government started to support antinazi initiatives of NGOs, because they saw that they have the capacity and the power to work long term on this issue. This has influenced media’s attitude towards antiracist NGOs: articles on these topics are getting more space and attention.

Another speaker from the Social Action Centre in Ukraine presented a short history of the “new era” of the neonazi movement, appeared in Ukraine in 1989. The reason lies in the economical situation of Ukraine, political games, ignorance, fashion and boredom of young people. The actual structure of the new neonazi movement is divided into Pro-Ukrainian and Pro-Slavonic having five core organisations and political parties in their backgrounds. Most of the neonazi activities are located in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, Ternopil’, Dnipropetrovsk, L’viv, and are supported from Russia, Belarus, Poland and Germany through the “Blood and Honour” network present all over Europe and United States. In Ukraine, neonazi movements have very good international connections and cooperation with political parties; they are conducting an active propaganda and use extreme violence. They believe in recruitment of new forces, anti-capitalism, anti-globalisation, anti-antifascism, anti-Zionism. The attitude of the government towards the rising antisemitism in Ukraine is much split: either it takes place or not. The government still tends to ignore the situation, only NGOs and antifascist activists are doing something about it.

The problem is, that the civil society is sleeping, people are stepping aside even when hate crimes are taking place. Police’s attitude towards minorities/migrants shows that they tend to arrest people without reason, just because of their skin colour, and ask for bribe.
Coming from Hungary, the speaker from the Kurt Lewin Foundation gave some background information about the links between the Hungarian history, the feeling of injustice, values, and aims or simple slogans of the Hungarian right-wing extremism.

In the autumn of 2006, there were several demonstrations against the government in Hungary and the members of Hungarian extreme-right-wing organisations went on streets and took part in it.

The Magyar Gárda Association is supporting the national self-defence by building up the National Guard. The Magyar Gárda sympathises with the locals in their fear of Roma, when extreme events happen, stating that they will save them. They organise anti-Roma demonstrations in villages, where there is also Roma minority, lots of people joining their marches with the message: Roma, take care!

The research program of Kurt Lewin Foundation started an educational program targeting teachers in secondary schools. The program aims to promote tolerance, strengthen democratic values and provides practical methods for teachers.

### 3.3 Tolerance or Antiracism?

Where are the limits between respecting the liberty of expression of each individual in a democratic society and the violation of human rights?

This discussion took place in the evening, during the political café “Antiracism versus Tolerance”. The frustrating result of the discussion was that democracy values are respected differently from country to country. In some cases laws “over-protect” by creating limits to individual liberty, in other cases, on the contrary, laws allow in the name of the freedom of speech expressions of extremisms such as neo-fascism, naziism, hate crimes and institutional racism.

### 3.4 Right-wing Extremism in Italian Stadiums

A representative of Luxembourg Against Racism, talked about the Italian Ultras movement in sports and the way it reflects the recent political attitude towards right-wing in Italy.

Today there is a dangerous relation between Ultras and neofascists who meet outside the stadiums to form coalitions. The measures taken by the Italian state to counteract violence and xenophobia have led to the criminalisation of all traditional Ultras groups with no political agenda, leaving space for the more violent groups often linked with neofascist ideas.

The stadium is a perfect place to promote antiracism and to fight against right-wing extremism. For that, it is necessary to initiate actions and campaigns from bottom up, in cooperation with Ultras groups and sport institutions. It would be useful to have a European office centralising such initiatives and researching the phenomena of radical right in sports. Stadiums can be used as space for informal antiracism education involving all actors active in sport field, from supporter groups to sport clubs.

### 3.5 Nazirock and Radical Right

Participants of the conference organised in one of the evenings a political café "Nazirock and Radical Right", to explore deeper the infiltration of extreme right in the public space.

About 40 participants watched a documentary movie “Nazirock” by Claudio Lazzaro, showing the extreme right seen from the inside of the movement: its music, its leaders, its alliances, its rites, and the political acceptance that opens doors to institutionalised power for the Italian nazi-fascists.

An international “festival” called “Campo d’Azione 2006” was organised in Italy by the political movement Forza Nova (the New Force) whose leader was sentenced for forming an armed band. During this event several rock-bands, political activists and leaders from Spain, Germany, France, Greece, Lebanon and Romania participated. The scene of the festival shows rock-bands being acclaimed by the public with the nazi-fascist salute, animated speeches and discussion around nazi-fascist topics, souvenir stands with the face of Hitler, books denying the existence of the Holocaust, like the one written by Carlo Mattogno and entitled “Auschwitz, the end of a legend”. The slogan of the event was “More naziism for us all”.

### 3.6 Music Against Racism

As a reaction to all presentations and discussions about the manifestations of neo-nazi-fascists a representative of the Never Again Association from Poland presented in the Open Forum an example of good practice “Music Against Racism”, a project promoting non-violent strategy against the manifestations of radical right groups.

The Never Again Association in Poland mobilises youth through cultural campaigns to combat fascism in concerts and football matches. The organisation monitors the nazi movements and their actions. The music festival “Music Against Racism” is collecting all necessary funds by making a CD with a music collection from various countries and from independent bands with copyright-free music.
3.7 Combat Fascism, GET ACTIVE!

9th November - The International Day Against Fascism, Antisemitism and Islamophobia is a European-wide campaign coordinated by UNITED to protest against intolerance and promote reconciliation and respect. The strength of this campaign in 2007 was the use of different approaches and methods with one common vision of intercultural understanding and peace. Organisations implemented all over Europe local, national and international events such as public discussions, meetings with eyewitnesses, demonstrations, commemoration activities, conferences, poster and media actions, cultural events and much more.

The campaign working group proposed concrete strategies and actions for future campaigns:
- Collect data and check fascist contents, use it in awareness raising events.
- Use media not just for promoting activities or for monitoring and reporting, but to attend / organise media seminars and journalist trainings to raise awareness.
- Organise trainings or workshops on human rights, civic education and history where students and teachers also participate.
- Find local partners for campaign events such as the local government, court, social workers, public servants and church representatives to promote the activities.
- Organise cultural events, joining other events, festivals, and find common points in different events to promote our mission regarding antifascism and antisemitism.
- Adapt the actions to the local context.

4.1 One Europe, Two Europe...Find your Place!

Nowadays European population seems to be united and to have a common European identity. Yet, dividing lines are growing both on the maps and in the minds of people across the continent. It seems that there is not one Europe, but several versions or visions of it. “Europe” is more than just geographical concept. But where does Europe end? Ethnic stereotypes and xenophobic attitudes often define how we project other “Europeans”. There is a new phenomenon of discrimination towards migrants from the East of the continent, that are seen as “less European” or do not fit existing stereotypes. The new “identity” that surpasses national borders creates new divisions and leads to other forms of discrimination. What is the nature of the phenomenon? How can we address this problem?

During the thematic working group “One Europe, Two Europe...Find your Place” participants discussed the above issues, focusing on the differences between East and West and the phenomenon of discrimination towards those who are perceived ‘less European’. When participants were trying to explain or define what Europe means, there were various opinions about this topic, but it remained an open question. Can one talk about European identity, when we know that there are many other identities, that they multiply and overlap? It is important to mention that people have to be careful in discussing such topics, to avoid creating new borders.

The strategies discussed by the group focused on a common conclusion that the more fundings are needed and there has to be a common policy between the European Union, the Council of Europe and the European Commission. The group discussed and got several ideas for new campaigns, for example an awareness raising campaign about what is Europe within the UNITED Network; a campaign for the Russian language to become a new language in the Council of Europe, etc. The fact that there is a hierarchy of importance of countries within the European Union is more and more of an issue and the fact that the national stereotypes are being more and more uploaded these awareness raising actions or campaigns should be more on focus.

4.2 Welcome Refugees! Tear Down The Walls!

All across Europe refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are living under critical circumstances in detention centres well hidden from the eyes of the European public. They have been reduced to nothing more than numbers on files, and their access to basic human rights is constantly denied. Only very few people fully understand and acknowledge how much human rights are violated in the detention centres and courts of Europe. How can we be a part of a movement that not only fights the propaganda and lies, but also makes the human rights violations and the conditions in the detention centres visible to the eyes of Europe?

The Thematic Working Group “Welcome Refugee! Tear Down the Walls” discussed and developed strategies for “tearing down the walls” that surround the detention centres in Europe. The key issues relating to refugees were the growing amount of human rights violations against refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs and the conditions within detention centres all over Europe. The implementation of policies and laws are not protecting the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and IDPs. The fact that EU tries to export “the problem” to countries surrounding the EU (that are either not capable of, or not interested in protecting the rights of the asylum seekers).
was tackled when the topic of Fortress Europe came up. The fatal realities of Fortress Europe also include deaths upon deportations from EU countries. When facing deportation, some rejected asylum seekers see no other solution than to commit suicide in order to give their minor children a chance to stay in a EU country.

Some of the strategies/practices compiled by the working group to address the key problems were:
- Monitoring refugees, which gives data and insight into the extent of the violations, it is also a way to register hate speech, racism etc.
- Creating open databases with all the information, that can be supplied to both media and other organisations with concrete facts.
- Monitoring the implementation of policies makes it possible to hold politicians responsible to promises they give when making policies.
- Coordinated lobbying carried out by NGOs in close cooperation.
- Empowering refugees to tell their stories and make them aware of their rights.
- Fortress Europe is a regional problem that takes regional action from civil society to combat.

4.3 To move forward, we have to go back. Enough slavery, time for equal rights!

Today, millions of people are living or trying to live in other countries than their native one. In some cases, this movement is voluntary: people move across borders for work, education or family reasons. In many more cases, the migration is forced: they flee from war, civil strife, ethnic conflict, and violations of human rights. Migrants sending countries are also interested in these remittances, which play a key-role in their economy. The typical response to migrants and other displaced people has deteriorated from acceptance and assistance to hostility and rejection. The Thematic Working Group “Enough Slavery! Time for Equal Rights” focused on the situation of migrants in different European countries and especially the social aspects of migration issues.

A representative of the Romano Paso Research Centre, a Swedish Roma NGO explained the slave mentality of Swedish society towards Roma. The attitudes towards migrants are in many cases security paranoia, social exclusion and racist attacks. There is a need to educate and train teachers, motivating them to engage in voluntary activities in order to improve the services provided for immigrants.

Participants agreed about the need to have intercultural mediators (second generation migrant speaking their language) not just in the governmental institutions, but also other public institutions such as schools and hospitals. Such a mediator can create a sense of safety and trust (common background), and have a role as facilitator in the communication and access to other social services. Information is very important; immigrants do not have the necessary information and do not know their rights. NGOs try to promote access to information but they need to cooperate with governments and a continuous exchange of information with other NGOs to facilitate the processes. Access to jobs and the possibilities of employment is also a common issue. The qualifications of migrants are not recognised, even if people have good educational backgrounds, they are “forced” to take other jobs in lower qualifications.

4.4 Refugees Between Hate Crimes & Discrimination

On 14 February, Ukrainian authorities carried out a deportation of eleven Uzbek asylum seekers to Tashkent where they were imprisoned. The Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) has been the major force behind the deportation and the following disinformation campaign.

Support for the asylum seekers in Ukraine is missing; the Immigration office rejects the refugee/asylum permits without reading them. Even if the asylum seekers have these permits it does not secure their status to stay in the country, either because the permit is not taken into account or because of the extortion practiced by the authorities. Recently, the Ministry of Interior has given out an official order, the “Operation Migrant”, where the police had to patrol for one or two months and to bring in to the police station as many migrants as they can find and then let them go.

The Ukrainian Association Initiative “No Border” tries to draw attention of Ukrainians and representatives of other European countries to the racist policy on migration and addresses the questions of contemporary forms of racism and xenophobia. “No Border” is involving local citizens in: antiracist education events, open public events, film screenings, exhibitions, concerts and discussions, aimed to improve local people’s attitude towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. One of the latest projects of “No Border” was related to the Ukrainian authorities’ actions to deport asylum seekers and the disinformation campaign of the Ukrainian Security Service: Human rights activists, Uzbeki refugees and “No Border” activists have begun a protest campaign against deportations. The protest took place on the 28th February in front of the Ukrainian MFA, state committee for nationalities and migration, and the Uzbek Embassy in Ukraine.

4.5 Being a refugee: A personal testimony

The majority of the participants present at the conference has a minority background, and some of them are refugees, asylum seekers or internally displaced persons. One of the conference participants, a Bosnian refugee living in Denmark, shared her personal experience as refugee. Belonging to the Bosnian minority in ex-Yugoslavia she was not allowed to buy in shops, while others kept in
the concentration camps were starved and forced to work, sometimes even killed randomly or used as human shields on the front. Leaving her native country was not the end of her problems: being a refugee in a foreign country was starting. Although the United Nations and the Red Cross in Denmark played an important role in placing the asylum seekers in the Danish society, today she still does not feel like home and she is dreaming of a life among citizens of the world, where people of different nations, religions and backgrounds are living in harmony and mutual respect.

4.6 Open Borders! 20th June - International Refugee Day & Fortress Europe No More Deaths
Since 1993, UNITED co-ordinates an on-going campaign called “The Fatal realities of Fortress Europe”, which aims to raise awareness on the tragedy going on at European borders and inside detention and deportation camps all over the continent. By updating a list of already more than 11105 documented deaths of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants who lost their lives in the attempt of entering Europe or because of detention/deportation procedures, UNITED has created a powerful lobby and awareness-raising tool that all organisations can use for campaigning.

On the 20th of June, the International Refugee Day, UNITED coordinates a European-wide campaign to highlight the issues of refugees on European level. Organisations taking part in this campaign have the opportunity to highlight particular cases of refugee, send protest letters to policy-makers or find other ways to express their opinions. Participants of the campaign working group came up with some slogans reflecting the current concerns.

The conclusion of the campaign working group was a warning for the future: “If in 2008 we have “Fortress Europe” where refugees and asylum seekers are detained and deported, in the future, perhaps in 2108 we will have “Fortress Africa”, where Europeans will have to face the same tragedies due to their own mistakes from the past. This situation has to be prevented before it is too late”.

5.1 UNITED - A network that rocks!
Why do we organise European campaigns? Think globally, act locally!
Racism is not a local issue. Equal rights and security are demanded all over Europe. European campaigns can help to set the agenda on all levels. We have to campaign on local, regional and European level to get our point heard across. By linking local and national actions, we can generate European-wide visibility. We can show that there is an enormous amount of people that believe in an intercultural open society. Campaigning gives to all participants a new energy to go on with their everyday struggle against racism and intolerance. You will get motivated and inspired by the ideas and enthusiasm of other people, learn from each others experience and views, generate more publicity due to the scope and size of the activity, mobilise more people. It is the variety and creativity of many different simultaneous activities all over Europe that make the UNITED campaigns unique. There is a common date, and every year a theme emerges that gets special attention.

5.2 Open the Gates, Get Educated!
Life long education has a key role to play in eradicating racism and valuing diversity and it is a responsibility of all educational establishments. Promoting racial equality demands a whole school/educational system approach and commitment from all those who are involved education, both inside and outside official school curriculum. Racism is without a doubt linked to the educational achievement of minority ethnic groups. The thematic working group “Open the Gates, Get Educated!” discussed topics mentioned above. They shared some examples in different countries in primary schools. Looking at examples of best practices was a way to find common strategies. The group’s recommendations were: to reach out to the schools and upgrade the school system; to organise trainings/workshops for teachers and educators about racism, discrimination and tolerance; to organise events where teachers, students and parents are also invited (this can be a football match, an intercultural afternoon, camps), in this way while the youngsters are busy with their activities the teachers and parents can interact and can be trained.

5.3 Educational Tools for Campaigning
Since life long learning was present in almost all discussions of the thematic working groups and all through the conference, there was also a campaign working group “Educational Tools for Campaigning: Learn them and use them” that worked on finding new strat-
egies and educational tools that can be used by organisations in campaign activities. There are stereotypes and lack of information among teachers about society reality. It happens in every school in Europe that young people are being discriminated and the teachers are unaware. What to do? The group developed the following strategies: * to tackle the situation of school systems; * to educate teachers to be more up to date with these problems; * to organise educational summer camps.

5.4 Networking, sharing resources for maximum results
The campaign working group "Networking - Tell me how you do it!" discussed the role and purpose of networking with examples of good practices. Two principles became the focus of the discussions. Firstly, that personal contact between network members and relationships need to be developed to ensure spirit of initiative and mutuality. Secondly, that the network secretariat should see its role as actively monitoring, developing and improving information flows. In line with both of these principles the network secretariat should introduce supporters with common objectives, rather than just providing contact details.

UNITED could also develop the idea of ambassadors, who can promote participation within the network through other events, conferences. Network supporters in each country could provide translation and outreach meetings with other NGOs through community network representatives (volunteers), in this way the accessibility of materials, maintaining contacts and interests and information flow are ensured. Participants felt that they needed to expand the information flow and communication to issues and experience beyond Europe. Networks defined by a particular set of common interests and spaces, should have fixed connection to other networks. For example UNITED being a network of grass roots organisations, could get in contact with academic networks or networks outside the boundaries of Europe, or at governmental level. In particular all participants felt they would benefit from greater contact with practices outside Europe. To facilitate partnerships within the antiracist movement, since 1992, UNITED publishes the European Address Book Against Racism, one of the most well-known and well-used information tools for organisations that want to get in touch with other organisations to start collaboration. The annual printed edition contains the addresses of 2300 organisations and magazines active against racism, fascism, nationalism and in support of migrants and refugees and 135 funding institutions. This networking tool is widely distributed among the antiracist movement and it is also available on the website as a searchable online database.

5.5 Media Campaigning
The "Media Campaigning - Communication in Action!" campaign working group discussed communication and specific strategies for working with mass media.

Reaching out to independent media is a good way to get messages out and to find information, as they are mostly composed of independent media organisations, and freelance journalists that offer non-corporative coverage. NGO activists should organise seminars for journalists, to educate them by drawing their attention to issues of anti-discrimination and antiracism work. Seminars are also a good way to reach out to the young journalists who are still studying. An Internet conference is, for instance, very effective and cheap. What makes a UNITED conference unique is its intercultural character. Meeting a large amount of interesting people of different backgrounds keeps most of participants wide-awake from early mornings to late evenings.

6. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Beyond the working sessions, there was time to get to know each other, to build fellowships, to network and socialise, to catch inspiration or to create basis for future cooperation. A great spectrum of social and optional activities had animated such burst of bridging of cultures and identities.

During one evening of the conference, the ‘info-market’, all delegates have their space to introduce the activities of their own organisation and to share with the rest of the group a taste, a sound or a colour of own culture. Everyone exchanges opinions and practices, and in particular, explores the possibilities of future partnerships. Later on in the evening, the atmosphere of exchanging International snacks superseded all serious talks, the participants set out for tasting drinks and snacks they have never tried before or they have had some good memories of. Such energiser catalysed a passionate socialising and mutual cultural interchanges.

There was also space in the program to explore the cultural life of Stockholm, during a cultural tour through the city and a visit to the historical museum. After exploring the beautiful scene of Stockholm participants were delighted with a delicious dinner prepared by members of the local Afro-Swedish Association accompanied with a wonderful live concert with African music and dance performed by a local band.
THANK YOU

This conference is the result of the common effort of many people and organisations in Europe for more than a year. A big thank you goes to participants and to their sending organisations, which supported the conference with their ideas, good spirit, their energy and their suggestions.

Thanks to the International Preparatory Group, who developed and carried out the conference’s program:
• Emanuela - Associazione Rieti Immigrants - ARI (I)
• Marcell - Foundation of Subjective Values (H)
• Zakarias - GetEducated - Learning Media Against Racism (S)
• Camelia - MTP Oradea (RO)
• Kitimbwa - National Afro-Swedish Association (S)
• Natia - The Union 21st Century (GE)
• Mikkel - Worthy Life for Asylum Seekers (DK)
• Dmitri - Youth Human Rights Movement (RUS)

Warm thanks for our hosting partner organisations: National Afro-Swedish Association and GetEducated - Learning Media Against Racism and their volunteers. They took care permanently of our comfort and all organisational details during and before our stay in Stockholm.

Many thanks to our sponsors: European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe • The Swedish National Board of Youth Affairs • Commission of the European Union - Grundtvig Programme • Cyprus Youth Board • Service National Jeunesse Luxembourg

Special thanks go to the wonderful and always-active staff members and volunteers of the UNITED Secretariat for the energy, passion and fun they brought in the preparation and smooth run of the conference.

Report edited by Aliz Matza - Miscarea Tinerilor pentru Pace, Oradea, Romania

UNITED is Supported by:

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The information contained herein does not necessarily reflect the position nor the opinion of our sponsors. Sponsors are not to be held responsible for any use that may be made of it.

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# UNITED Conference 2008

**Get Educated, Fight Racism!**

- **27 May - 1 June 2008 in Stockholm, Sweden**

## Conference Program

### Morning

- **9:30-12:30**
  - **Thematic Working Groups**
  - **Presentation of the Results**
  - **Sharing practices...**
  - **Plenary session -**

- **10:30-12:30**
  - **GET ACTIVE!**
  - **Panel discussion -**

### Lunch

### Afternoon

- **14:30-18:30**
  - **Council of Europe**
  - **Anti-racism Activism in Sweden**
  - **Guided Tour Stockholm**
  - **Guided City Tour**

- **15:00-16:00**
  - **A Refugee Testimony**

- **16:00-19:00**
  - **Fascism! Spot It and Stop It!**
  - **Music Against Racism**

- **17:30-18:30**
  - **Conference Evaluation**
  - **Plenary session -**

### Dinner & Music

### Farewell Party

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**UNITED for Intercultural Action**

**PB 413 • NL-1000 AK Amsterdam**

**Phone +31-20-6834778 • Fax +31-20-6834582 • info@unitedagainstracism.org • www.unitedagainstracism.org**
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<th>Organisation</th>
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Background information about the project ‘Civil Society Against Right-Wing Extremism’

This project was developed after many years experience of UNITED network in antidiscrimination campaigns and deep analysis on the current trends of European civil society active in the fight against right-winged extremism, racism and discrimination. Experience shows that despite the quantitative and qualitative work done by many organizations active in this field, many NGO’s have little knowledge about democratic institutions and processes. Nevertheless, there are effective ways to tackle discrimination at its local and regional level through innovative and informal learning strategies. There are as well ways to give the best practices a European dimension. The aim of the project is to create a space for antiracial adult education and make it qualified, available and accessible throughout Europe. The objectives are: the creation of feasible ways to enhance the work of local grassroots groups and NGO’s active in the field of antiracial education, their training as learning facilitators in antiracial education, and the counterbalance of the unevenness in antiracial fight Europe-wide. The project has as its direct target group precisely NGOs activists. Ultimately, the project is also expected reach-out the NGOs' target groups, mainly disadvantaged social categories with less opportunities to access education else way. The main activities envisaged include identification, selection and dissemination of best practices in the antiracist field, conferences, workshops and campaigns, which will eventually bring the following outputs: publications, handbooks, info leaflets, web-pages and campaigning material.

What is UNITED?

UNITED for Intercultural Action is the European network against nationalism, racism, fascism and in support of migrants and refugees. Linked through UNITED, more than 560 organizations from a wide variety of backgrounds, from all European countries, work together on a voluntary basis. They base their cooperation on common actions and shared activities on a mutual respect. UNITED is and will remain independent from all political parties, organisations and states, but seeks an active co-operation with other anti-racist initiatives in Europe. Through the UNITED network organizations meet each other, work on common actions and share information. European-wide action weeks, campaigns and such are planned and discussed on UNITED conferences. Like-minded organisations find each other on such conferences and work together on specific projects and on specific topics. Information is received from more than 2000 organisations and mailings go out to about 2200 groups in Europe. If you want to get involved, discuss the ideas and aims of the UNITED network within your organisation. Let us know that your organization would like to join or receive information. And add us to your mailing list!

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a project supported by the Grundtvig Program of the European Commission implemented by UNITED for Intercultural Action in partnership with partners in 8 countries